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CHILDREN'S REINTEGRATION IN LIBERIA

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and
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With deep sadness, DCOF and the authors recall the untimely death on February 9, 2005, of Samuel Tamba Kamanda, known to his friends and family as T-Boy. He was IRC's Disarmament, Demobilization, Rehabilitation, and Reintegration Program Manager, and he had been responsible for planning and guiding many of the program activities on which the visit focused. His dedication and commitment to the protection of the children of Liberia and to the reintegration of former child soldiers was made clearly evident by the words of his former co-workers and through the program that he did so much to develop. He is deeply missed.

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LIST OF ACRONYMS

CWC	Child Welfare Committee
DCOF	Displaced Children and Orphans Fund
DCHA	Democracy, Conflict, and Humanitarian Assistance
DDRR	disarmament, demobilization, rehabilitation, and reintegration
IDP	internally displaced person
IRC	International Rescue Committee
NGO	nongovernmental organization
NPFL	National Patriotic Front of Liberia
PLA	Participatory Learning and Action
PRA	Participatory Rapid Appraisal
PTA	Parent Teacher Association
RUF	Revolutionary United Front
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UNMIL	UN Mission in Liberia
UNOCHA	United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs
USAID	United States Agency for International Development

MAP


10°
8°
Guinea
Meli R.
Makona R.
Sierra Leone
Voinjama
Diani R.
Lola R.
8°
Gbeya R.
Zorzor
Niandi R.
Via R.
Yekepa
Cote d' Ivoire
Moa R.
Mani R.
Sanniquellie
Noway Camp
Saint Paul R.
Gahnpa
Palala
Bomi Hills
Gbarnga
Tubmanburg
Bong Town
Totota
Nuon R.
Nzo R.
Robertsport
Kle
Kakata
Tapeta
Cavally R.
Monrovia
Gardnersville
Liberia
Paynesville
Harbel
Zwedru
Saint John R.
6°
Buchanan
Cestos R.
Dube R.
Pyne Town
River Cess
Atlantic Ocean
Greenville
Nyaake
N
Grand Cess
Plibo
Harper
Cape Palmas
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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The impacts of years of war and disruption of life in Liberia have had profound effects on children. Each of the armed factions made extensive use of children as fighters and in support roles. Many girls were kidnapped and taken as "wives" by fighters. Most children experienced displacement; fear; material deprivation; and loss of access to basic material resources, health services, and schooling. Many children were separated from their families. By the end of 2003 a United Nations peacekeeping force (UNMIL) had begun to deploy in Liberia and a process of disarmament, demobilization, reintegration, and rehabilitation (DDRR) began.

Between 1994 and 2004 the Displaced Children and Orphans Fund (DCOF) of USAID provided over $6.3 million to support projects for war-affected children in Liberia. Grantees were the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) and the International Rescue Committee (IRC). Current DCOF funding for Liberia is $1,672,000 for IRC's current Vulnerable Children and Youth Protection and Development project of IRC, which has a closing date of September 21, 2006.

DCOF sent its senior technical advisor, John Williamson, and consultant, Randolph Carter, to Liberia for the period February 9-18, 2005. The team visited Monrovia, including Ricks and Chocolate City IDP camps, and Ganta. The purpose of the visit was to (1) review progress being made by the International Rescue Committee in the implementation of its project, Vulnerable Children and Youth Protection and Development, and (2) considering these results and lessons and USAID's *Fragile States Strategy*[1], to explore with the USAID mission in Liberia whether there are critical priorities with respect to social and economic integration of children and adolescents that additional DCOF funding could address effectively over the next 3 to 5 years.

One of the most impoverished countries in the world, Liberia has experienced years of armed conflict. Large numbers of children were displaced, killed, abducted, or forced to become part of various fighting forces. The country devolved to a failed state, but it has a transitional government in place and elections for a new government are scheduled for October 2005. Despite its significant natural resources and potential for agricultural development, the country's continued progress toward peace, security, and development remains precarious. The following table reflects significant elements of the country's transition from war to peace.

	Liberia*
Start of war	December 1989
Disarmament and demobilization period	December 2003 – January 2005
Boys below 18 years demobilized	8,771
Girls below 18 years demobilized	2,511
Male adults demobilized	69,281
Female adults demobilized	22,456
Total demobilized	103,019

Of the children formally demobilized, 99 percent were reunited with family members or relatives. However, some of those reunited subsequently migrated to other areas rather than reintegrate locally. This drift to other areas was likely influenced by the desire to find livelihood opportunities. Youth have been central to conflict in Liberia, and the view is widely shared that ensuring ongoing

[1] USAID, January 2005, PD-ACA-999.

opportunities for education, training, and livelihood opportunities for youth will be key to maintaining peace.

Communication among bodies with various roles in the DDRR process in Liberia appears to have been and to remain constrained, reducing the effectiveness of coordination during the current reintegration phase. Demobilized child combatants are angry that they are not receiving the monthly cash allowances that they believe were promised to them. At the same time, Liberians who did not fight are angry that former fighters are being rewarded with cash and, in some cases, support for education or training, while they lack these opportunities. Education, skills training, and livelihood opportunities are identified consistently by youth as essential to building peace in Liberia.

The goal of IRC's Vulnerable Children and Youth Protection and Development project is, "to mitigate the effect of violence and displacement on Liberian young people by engaging communities in addressing protection concerns and ensuring psychosocial well-being." Its three objectives are:

- To increase communities' ability to identify and respond to protection concerns affecting children and youth
- To create supportive school environments for children affected by armed conflict
- To ensure that children and youth both in and out of school participate in activities promoting their psychosocial and educational development, with particular attention paid to vulnerable children such as former child soldiers and separated children

At the time of the team's visit, the project had begun to shift its emphasis from camps for the displaced in Montserrado County to Lofa County, where IRC is working with communities to facilitate reintegration, child protection, and education. Because DCOF's visit to Liberia was relatively brief, travel to Lofa was not feasible in addition to making necessary contacts in Monrovia. Consequently, it was decided that the team would visit Nimba County, which was more readily accessible and where IRC is implementing the same activities through another USAID-funded project.

Child Welfare Committees

In Lofa and Nimba, IRC is working with internally displaced camp populations and communities to develop Child Welfare Committees (CWCs). The team met with CWCs in Ganta and the Ricks camp. As conceived in the proposal that IRC submitted for DCOF funding, these committees are to include about 10 individuals representing a gender and age-balanced cross section of the community. The proposal says that:

The primary role of these committees will be to raise awareness of child protection issues through group dialogues and community-wide awareness raising events. In addition, the committees will become advocates for improved conditions for children and youth, and will act as liaisons between the community and camp-based committees, external protection monitors, NGOs, and government agencies on child welfare issues.

The proposal also anticipated a number of specific activities that the CWCs would carry out. IRC has worked with communities to help them select CWC members and has provided training to those selected. The team discussed with IRC staff alternative approaches to initiating and maintaining a child protection function in a community and the strengths, limitations, and likely resource requirements of each approach. Since the concept of CWCs was developed externally and brought to communities by IRC, in the eyes of a community the "ownership" of this structure is likely to be with IRC, despite volunteer participation of some community members. The continuity of a CWC is likely to depend on IRC or some other body providing some form of ongoing support to it. It is not clear that such ongoing support is forthcoming in the near future.

In contrast, action that is initiated and planned by community members based on their perceived needs and priorities is more likely to be "owned" by participants, and consequently, more likely to continue over time without expectation of ongoing support from a specific outside source. While such an approach has a better chance of generating ongoing activities, it has disadvantages from the standpoint of ensuring the specific ongoing action for child protection expected of CWCs. The report includes a table that identifies differences between the approach of service delivery through community participation, which IRC has used with CWCs, and a community owned, led, and managed approach. In communities where tangible, ongoing support to a CWC is not likely to be available, a community owned and developed approach may be a more viable way to establish some kind of ongoing child protection activity.

Peer Educators

Peer-to-peer education on life skills and HIV/AIDS is another component of the project. The DCOF team was able to talk with some of the peer educators and observe some of their activities. It is crucial that communication between the peer educators and the implementing organization regarding their mandate be clear and concise. It is also important that the peer educators understand the content of the materials to be presented, the targeted audience, the scope of the program, as well as the relevant support mechanisms available to them. In addition, analysis of the current community views and responses to sex-related topics is needed to prepare the peer educators to communicate effectively and deal with stigma and culturally sensitive issues.

The peer educators with whom the DCOF team met were focused on only a portion of the full range of topics planned by IRC. They focused largely on promoting condoms, which is important but is only one of the "ABCs" of HIV prevention.[2] Also, their approach seemed largely to be didactic, rather than employing effective peer-to-peer communication. In contrast, at a youth rally in Montserrado, Mr. Carter led participants through an exercise in which their communication became much more engaging and spontaneous. During that exercise, participating youth stressed the importance of educational opportunities to building a stable peace in Liberia. Additional concerns about peer education arose during the camp visits, where it became clear that many parents did not want their children to talk with the peer educators, whose approach seemed to them to be inconsistent with Liberian culture. A different approach seems appropriate, one that involves adults as well as youth in developing the program approach and that provides for ongoing support to the program.

Mr. Carter visited a DCOF-funded school of 316 pupils (53 percent of whom were girls) in Soul Clinic, Paynesville. He found overcrowded classrooms, insufficient materials, and too few teachers and teacher assistants. Despite these shortcomings, the school was particularly proud of the level of Parent-Teacher Association involvement in its daily activities.

One of the aims of DCOF's visit to Sierra Leone immediately preceding the visit to Liberia was to learn lessons regarding the demobilization and reintegration of former child soldiers. Given the relevance of those issues to the situation in Liberia and IRC's work, these are included in the report. The following were identified as elements critical to the successful reintegration of former child soldiers:

1. Community sensitization.
2. Formal disarmament and demobilization.

[2] Uganda is one of the few countries, globally, that has been able to reduce the adult HIV prevalence rate. The strategy used these emphasized Abstence (delaying the onset of sexual activity), Being faithful to one partner (for those who are sexually active, and using a Condom consistently – ABC.

3. Transition period in separate centers for boys and girls located well away from adult DDR sites.
4. Tracing and family mediation.
5. Return to family, community and follow-up, and extended monitoring for children not placed with their parents.
6. Traditional cleansing ceremonies, traditional healing, and religious support.
7. School or skills training of adequate quality and duration, coupled with literacy and numeracy instruction and provision of tools, materials, and follow-up counseling.
8. Ongoing access to health care, particularly for war-related conditions, for those in school or training.
9. Individual supportive counseling, facilitation, and encouragement.

Recommendations

1. DCOF recommends that IRC review its approach to developing CWCs in consultation with other child protection NGOs and UNICEF.
2. DCOF recommends that IRC review the Peer Education component of its program with regard to:
   - The effectiveness of the peer educators in changing knowledge, attitudes, and practices among youth, particularly with regard to their reproductive health;
   - The role that the community might be able to play in planning and supporting peer education; and
   - Whether this intervention is to be phased out by the end of the current grant period or through other resources.
3. There is a clear need in Liberia to increase the access of children and youth to education, skills training, and livelihood opportunities. Maintaining and securing peace in the country very likely depends on such opportunities being increased in the near term and sustained. It is not yet clear, however, whether DCOF funds could fill a special niche within a larger strategy to accomplish this. A typical DCOF grant would be from $1 to $1.5 million dollars for three years. By itself, that level of funding would not be enough to make a serious impact on the access of Liberian youth to education, skills training, and livelihood opportunities because of the magnitude of the need and since DCOF funding could only be used to benefit that component of the "youth" cohort who are below 18 years of age.

DCOF recommends that USAID/Monrovia consider any possibilities that might exist to collaborate with one or more other donors (including other offices within USAID, especially within the Bureau for Democracy, Conflict, and Humanitarian Assistance as well as other Pillar Bureaus) in a coordinated, multi-faceted program for vulnerable youth that could address a wider age range than DCOF funds alone. One area to explore could be skills training linked to infrastructure development. A bottom line issue for DCOF in any proposal to address such issues in Liberia would be that it makes a persuasive case for proposed activities having a measurable impact on the safety or well-being of especially vulnerable children below age 18. If the mission is able to identify a role for additional DCOF funding to play in developing a targeted, well-designed, innovative approach to significantly improve access for Liberian youth to education, skills training, and/or livelihood opportunities, it should request the commitment of additional DCOF funds, providing details on activities to be supported, how DCOF funds would be programmed, and whether they would relate to complementary funding from other sources.

INTRODUCTION

Liberia's civil war began in late December 1989, when Charles Taylor led a small group of fighters into the country from Côte d'Ivoire. The government of Samuel Doe responded brutally along ethnic lines and drove many into the ranks of Taylor's National Patriotic Front of Liberia (NPFL). Divisions soon developed with the NPFL and a number of factions emerged in different parts of the country. The Economic Community of West Africa sent a peacekeeping force, which was unable to impose peace and became another party to the conflict. Doe was overthrown and killed and fighting spread throughout the country. After numerous failed peace efforts, in May 1996 a shaky ceasefire finally held, disarmament began, and, in July 1997, Charles Taylor was elected president.

Taylor and his government proceeded to extract wealth from the country through the sale of timber and diamonds and to support the rebel, Revolutionary United Front (RUF) in neighboring Sierra Leone. His government was eventually sanctioned by the United Nations Security Council for trying to destabilize neighboring countries. In 2001, war again broke out in Liberia, when two rebel groups scaled up their attacks on the Taylor government. These were LURD, in northwest Liberia, whose ethnic base is primarily Mandingo, and who had support from Guinea, and MODEL, in the southeast, with Support from Côte d'Ivoire. Each gradually gained ground, and by August 2003, Taylor had retreated to the capital, Monrovia, and under strong international pressure, stepped down as President and left the country for exile in Nigeria.[1] It has been estimated that more that a quarter of a million people lost their lives during the war and that perhaps 1 of every 10 Liberia children was at one time or another a part of one of the various militia groups.[2]

On August 18, 2003, a Comprehensive Peace Agreement was signed by the various armed groups as well as political parties and civil society organizations. By the end of 2003, a United Nations peacekeeping force (UNMIL) had begun to deploy. A process of disarmament, demobilization, reintegration, and rehabilitation (DDRR) began, with each demobilized combatant receiving a cash payment of $300.[3]

The impacts of years of war and disruption of life and basic services have had profound effects on children. Each of the armed factions made extensive use of children as fighters and in support roles. Many girls were kidnapped and taken as "wives" by fighters. Most children experienced displacement; fear; material deprivation; and loss of access to basic material resources, health services, and schooling. Many lost family members or were separated from their families. Some children have been forced to turn to the street to survive, drug use has escalated, and some girls have resorted to exchanging sex for money or goods to survive.

The Displaced Children and Orphans Fund and Sierra Leone

Established in 1989 by an act of the United States Congress, the Displaced Children and Orphans Fund (DCOF) is administered by the Bureau for Democracy, Conflict, and Humanitarian Assistance of the United States Agency for International Development (USAID). DCOF is managed by Lloyd Feinberg and is supported by the Displaced Children and Orphans Fund, War Victims Fund and Victims of Torture Fund Technical Support, managed by Manila Consulting Group, Inc. DCOF has evolved into a program that focuses on issues of loss and displacement among children in the developing world, primarily children affected by armed conflict and street children. Its fundamental approaches are to strengthen the capacity of families and communities to protect and care for their most vulnerable children, as well as strengthening children's own capacities to provide for their own needs. In keeping with DCOF's standard approach, "children" in this report are considered to be below 18 years of age.

Between 1994 and 2004, DCOF provided over $6.3 million to support projects for war-affected children in Liberia. Grantees were the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) and the International Rescue Committee (IRC).

Table 1. DCOF Funding History in Liberia

Grantee	Dates	Amount
UNICEF	9/30/94 -12/31/99	$2,700,000
UNICEF	9/30/0 - 3/31/03	1,980,535
IRC	9/22/03-9/21/06	1,672,070
TOTAL		$6,352,605

DCOF sent its senior technical advisor, John Williamson, and a consultant, Randolph Carter, to Liberia for the period February 9-18, 2005. The team visited Monrovia, including Ricks and Chocolate City IDP camps, and Ganta. The purpose of the visit was to (1) review progress being made by the International Rescue Committee (IRC) in the implementation of its project, Vulnerable Children and Youth Protection and Development, and, (2) considering these results and lessons and USAID's *Fragile States Strategy*[4], to explore with the USAID mission in Liberia whether there are critical priorities with respect to social and economic integration of children and adolescents that additional DCOF funding could address effectively over the next three to five years. Immediately prior to visiting Sierra Leone, Mr. Williamson visited Sierra Leone January 31-February 9, where he addressed similar objectives. A list of key contacts during the Liberia portion of the visit is included in Appendix D and key resource documents are listed in Appendix E.

Context and Conflict – Sierra Leone and Liberia

Sierra Leone and neighboring Liberia are similar in many respects and the recent conflicts in the two countries have been interrelated. For these reasons as well as the fact that the DCOF visit to Liberia immediately followed one to Sierra Leone, this section briefly notes similarities and differences between the two countries and their respective conflicts.

Similarities

Liberia and Sierra Leone are among the most impoverished countries in the world. Each has experienced years of armed conflict and devolved to a failed state, then, subsequently, each has progressed toward recovery. Maintaining this momentum, much less making further progress toward becoming a relatively stable and secure democracy, is by no means assured in either country. Rioting last November in Liberia and at the end of February 2005 in Freetown clearly indicated that the peace in both countries is very fragile.

Despite large segments of their respective populations being impoverished, Liberia and Sierra Leone each have significant natural resources and excellent agricultural potential in terms of arable land and rainfall. Sierra Leone's mortality rate for children under five is the worst in the world, and Liberia's is fifth from the bottom.

Table 2. Statistical Comparisons – Liberia and Sierra Leone

	Liberia	Sierra Leone
Total population	3,367,000	4,963,289*
Infant mortality rate	157/1,000	166/1,000
Under five mortality rate	235/1000	284/1000
Gross national income per capita in 2003	$130	$150

Male adult literacy rate in 2000	70 percent	37 percent
Female adult literacy rate	51 percent	23 percent
Male net primary school enrollment	59	43
Female net primary school enrollment	53	39

* Statistic Sierra Leone, Provisional Results: 2004 Population and Housing Census
The State of the World's Children 2005: Childhood Under Threat, New York, pp. 108- 124.

Liberia adult HIV prevalence rate is estimated to be 5.9 percent (range: 2.7-12.4).[5] UNAIDS does not report an adult HIV prevalence rate for Sierra Leone. A study carried out by the National Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) found a national prevalence rate of 0.9 percent, which was lower than anticipated, and recommended further testing.[6]

War is something else the two countries have had in common, and conflict has been a major contributing factor to their respective levels of poverty and underdevelopment.

Table 3. Conflict Comparisons – Liberia Sierra and Leone

	Liberia*	Sierra Leone**
Start of war	December 1989	March 1991
Disarmament and demobilization period	December 2003 – January 2005	January 2001 – January 2002
Boys below 18 years demobilized	8,771	4,269
Girls below 18 years demobilized	2,511	274
Male adults demobilized	69,281	40,765
Female adults demobilized	22,456	2,920
Total demobilized	103,019	48,228

* National Commission on Disarmament, Demobilization, Rehabilitation, and Reintegration
** National Committee for Disarmament, Demobilization, and Reintegration

In Liberia and Sierra Leone, children and youth were significantly affected by armed conflict, and DCOF has supported similar interventions in both countries. In each conflict, large numbers of children were displaced, killed, abducted, or forced to become part of various fighting forces. Normal family life and children's education were disrupted, and most children, already poor, were pushed more deeply into poverty. A substantial proportion of each country's children fled their home, either for a camp for the internally displaced or for refuge in a neighboring country.

The conflicts in Liberia and Sierra Leone were linked in a number of ways. The beginning of the war in Sierra Leone resulted directly from support that forces loyal to then-warlord (and subsequently, President) Charles Taylor, provided to the Revolutionary United Front (RUF) in Sierra Leone. Taylor's regime derived significant resources from the sale of diamonds mined in Sierra Leone.

The origins of the conflicts in both countries have similar sources in their history and economic patterns. Paul Richards has described the origins of the Revolutionary United Front (RUF) and causes of the war in Sierra Leone in *Fighting for the Rainforest.*[7] Shortly before the team's visit to the two countries in 2005, the report on a study Richards led in Liberia, *Community Cohesion in Liberia: A Post-War Rapid Social Assessment*, had been released. [8] Each of these documents makes the case that patrimonial social and economic structure, with "big men" in control of resources, has characterized both countries and that this pattern has been carried over into the political domain. A result of this pattern, has been the social and economic subservience of youth and their marginalization and alienation from mainstream society and political structures. This analysis has direct implications for building peace in both countries. The following statement from *Community Cohesion in Liberia* echoes similar points regarding Sierra Leone in *Fighting for the Rainforest*:

The militas engaged in the Liberian conflict are 'fed' by a large number of young people in the interior who are no longer able, or willing, to integrate within a traditional social system based on family land and social defense. Demobilizing the militas requires the provision of alternatives to returning to rural dependency. This implies major changes in institutional frameworks for rural social solidarity, as well as changes in the employment opportunity structure.[9]

In the two documents, Richards has made a strong case that youth have been central to the conflicts in Liberia and Sierra Leone. The U.S. ambassadors with the team met in each of the countries in February 2005 emphasized that peace in each country may well depend on ensuring ongoing opportunities for education and training for youth. No one with whom the team met expressed a contrary view. The future stability of both countries likely depends on whether the large majority of youth will find access into the nexus of education, skills training, and employment. Youth with whom the team met during the visits to both countries consistently stressed how highly they value these opportunities.

There were similarities to the disarmament, demobilization, rehabilitation, and reintegration (DDRR) process in the two countries. In Sierra Leone 98 percent of the almost 7,000 children demobilized were reunited with parents, close family members or relatives, and in Liberia where over 11,000 children were formally demobilized, 99 percent were reunited. Despite these high reunification figures, some reunited children in each country subsequently migrated to other areas rather than remain with their family. This drift to other areas was likely influenced by the desire to find livelihood opportunities.

The capacity and potential of the youth with whom I met in Liberia and Sierra Leone was striking. Shortly before leaving Freetown, I met with members of the Children's Forum Network of Sierra Leone. I explained that I would soon take part in a youth rally in Monrovia and asked whether there was any message that they would like for me to convey to Liberian youth at the rally. The chairman of the network said:

Tell them that the children of Sierra Leone love them. We are one family. It is only us that can make peace in the Mano River Basin. Stand strong, Work hard. Talk what you know.

This message was well-received by participants in the youth rally in Monrovia.

Differences

The DDRR process for children in Liberia was significantly different from the process in Sierra Leone. In Liberia, a total of 38,000 adults and children were planned for, but 103,019 children and adults were disarmed and given cards identifying them as having been demobilized (and therefore eligible for support for reintegration). This has resulted in a major shortfall of resources for rehabilitation and reintegration. In Liberia, 30 percent of more than 11,000 children demobilized were girls, compared to Sierra Leone, where only 8 percent were girls, despite the large number of girls who had been abducted.

The coordination among key actors in the DDRR process in Sierra Leone was generally better than it has been in Liberia. UNICEF in Sierra Leone played a significant role over the years in developing an effective Child Protection Network in Sierra Leone. The network has helped to coordinate tracing, family reunification, and respective DDRR roles among nongovernmental organizations (NGOs), international organizations, governmental structures, and peacekeeping forces. By contrast, in Liberia communication among bodies with various roles in the DDRR process appears to have been and to remain constrained, reducing the effectiveness of coordination during the current reintegration phase. Despite initial plans to implement in Liberia a process similar to Sierra Leone's in which adults received cash and minors had the options of formal education or skills training, both children and adults have been given cash. This was done over UNICEF's objections. During the team's visit to Liberia, it was difficult to piece together consistent information about the apparent cash entitlements for demobilized child soldiers, in

terms of who promised what to whom, when, and why. Each of the NGOs with which the team met to discuss former child soldiers reported a somewhat different version of the procedures that had been planned for their disarmament, demobilization, and reintegration and for those of the follow through.

At the time of the visit, demobilized child combatants were angry that they were not receiving the monthly cash allowances that they believe were promised to them. At the same time, Liberians who did not fight were angry that former fighters were being rewarded with cash and, in some cases, support for education or training, while they lack these opportunities. A UNICEF report says:

> At the end of 2003 the UN Mission in Liberia and the Liberian National Commission on Demilitarization, Demobilization, Rehabilitation and Reintegration decided to include child ex-combatants in a cash allowance program where they received US$300. UNICEF and nongovernmental partners objected since such payments could create financial incentives for the recruitment and re-recruitment of child soldiers, making the child ex-combatants vulnerable to theft. Another concern was that the payments could cause community tension – children and others who had not participated in the conflict may have perceived such payments as discriminatory.[10]

While there was not enough time to explore the specific causes of the coordination and implementation problems, some of those interviewed suggested that while UNICEF had made determined efforts to coordinate action among the child-focused agencies, there had been insufficient communication and operational collaboration between the United Nations Mission in Liberia (UNMIL) authorities and the humanitarian agencies implementing the child-focused components of the DDRR process.

Another difference in the conflicts in the two countries has been that the ethnic dimensions of the conflict in Liberia are much sharper than those in Sierra Leone, with Mano, Gio, Mandingo, and Americo-Liberian ethnicity to some extent characterizing conflicting militias in Liberia.

Having used comparisons with Sierra Leone to help clarify the situation in Liberia, the report now shifts to a focus on Liberia.

The Importance of Education in Liberia

Throughout the team's visit, education, skills training, and livelihood opportunities were identified consistently by youth as essential to building peace in Liberia. The recent World Bank study on social cohesion, which included two months of rapid social assessment identified the lack of jobs and education as causes of the war. The study found that about three-quarters of the former fighters interviewed would like to return to their communities of origin and are eager for training that would enable them to participate in re-building those communities. [11]

Whenever children and youth spoke with the DCOF team in Liberia, they emphasized the importance of education. Adults did frequently stress the same point. For example, at the youth rally in Monrovia on February 12, Mr. Carter asked participants to divide into five groups and the first question he asked them to address was, "What do we consider most important to our survival today?" The first and in two cases only response of all five groups was "education."

The consistency and intensity of the value placed on education among Liberian children, youth, and adults with whom the DCOF team met made clear that, while education is seen as not only having value as a route to a better economic circumstance, but also seen as even more crucial. This was illustrated by the responses of Parent-Teacher Association (PTA) and village leaders to questions posed during focus group discussions carried out by IRC education specialists.

Participants were asked to respond to such questions as, "What are the most important reasons for sending your children to school?" and "What do you think are the most important things for children to learn in school?" IRC's Education Advisor reported that many responses concerned the skills needed for livelihoods, but there were also consistently a variety of responses that showed how education is also valued in additional ways:

"gateway to life"
"making the blind individual see"
"exposure to the outside world"/"live among different people"
"help our communities and nation"/"prepare future leaders"
"to represent us to the outside world and to represent us for tomorrow"
"bring about civilization"
"making children good people"
"giving children integrity"
"to learn to give full respect to other people and to elders"
"to learn an honor code"
"cultural heritage"[12]

Vulnerable Children and Youth Protection and Development Project

In Liberia, DCOF funds are currently being used to support IRC's Vulnerable Children and Youth Protection and Development project implemented.

The goal of the project is, "to mitigate the effect of violence and displacement on Liberian young people by engaging communities in addressing protection concerns and ensuring psychosocial well-being." Its three objectives are to:

- Increase communities' ability to identify and respond to protection concerns affecting children and youth
- Create supportive school environments for children affected by armed conflict
- Ensure that children and youth both in and out of school participate in activities promoting their psychosocial and educational development, with particular attention paid to vulnerable children such as former child soldiers and separated children

Much of the first year's work in this project was focused in Montserrado County. At the time of the visit, however, the project had begun to shift its emphasis to Lofa County, where IRC is working with communities to facilitate reintegration, child protection, and education. IRC reported that it had established one Child Welfare Committee (CWC) in Voinjama and planned to expand program activities to a total seven communities in Lofa. IRC also plans to maintain support to three communities in Monrovia: Soul Clinic, PHP, and Chocolate City. Because the DCOF visit was relatively brief, travel to Lofa was not feasible in addition to making necessary contacts in Monrovia. Consequently, it was decided that the team would visit Nimba County, which was more readily accessible and where IRC is implementing the same activities through the USAID-funded project, Rehabilitation and Reintegration of Women and Children Associated with Fighting Forces in Liberia.

Child Welfare Committees

IRC and some of the other international NGOs addressing child protection issues in Liberia are working with internally displaced camp populations and communities to develop Child Welfare Committees (CWCs). The team met with CWCs in Ganta and the Ricks camp. As conceived in the proposal that IRC submitted to USAID for DCOF funding, these committees are to include about ten individuals representing a gender and age-balanced cross section of the community. The proposal says that:

> The primary role of these committees will be to raise awareness of child protection issues through group dialogues and community-wide awareness raising events. In addition, the committees will become advocates for improved conditions for children and youth, and will act as liaisons between the community and camp-based committees, external protection monitors, NGOs, and government agencies on child welfare issues.

In addition, the proposal anticipated CWCs would carry out such activities as:

- Identify the primary issues affecting the welfare of children,
- Survey current human and organizational resources in their communities to identify and mobilize existing community resources to support war-affected children,
- Engage in dialogues on identifying and revising the best child protection practices that communities relied on prior to the conflict,
- Carry out community wide awareness raising events around child protection issues,
- Lead discussions with smaller groups of community members,
- Raise awareness of prevention of separation strategies,
- Carry out joint sensitization activities with teachers, teaching assistants and school administrators regarding the need for inclusion of vulnerable groups in the classroom (in conjunction with IRC and Parent-Teacher Associations (PTAs),
- Design the most appropriate methods for addressing the child welfare concerns, and
- Work with the community to identify solutions and reform [local] policies.

It was also anticipated that CWCs might play a role in organizing community members to take relevant action regarding specific issues identified locally, such as the reintegration of former child soldiers or sexual exploitation.

To help enable CWCs to carry out such activities, the proposal says that members will "be led through a participatory rapid appraisal (PRA) process to identify the primary issues affecting the welfare of children in their communities." It also says that they will:

> [P]articipate in trainings on topics such as child protection principles and children's rights principles such as those in the Convention on the Rights of the Child. Trainings could include a variety of topics including techniques in the prevention of family separation, conflict resolution and mediation, gender-based violence, advocacy skills, and leadership skills. Each child welfare committee will receive ongoing support, supervision and trouble-shooting advice from a skilled and trained protection officer.

The approach described above still seems highly appropriate. The DCOF team's visit provided an opportunity for staff of IRC and DCOF to reflect on the roles and activities of the CWCs in relation to the current context in Liberia. Two issues were discussed with IRC during the visit that would be appropriate for IRC to explore further both internally and jointly with other child protection NGOs and UNICEF. These were:

1. The process of initiating and sustaining CWCs and
2. Whether CWC members' primary role is to mobilize community action for vulnerable children or to intervene directly.

Who "Owns" a CWC?

The team discussed with IRC staff alternative approaches to initiating and maintaining a child protection function in a community and the strengths, limitations, and likely resource requirements of each approach. Table 1. was used for reference in these discussions. In particular we discussed the differences between delivering services through volunteers, and action that is locally owned, led, and managed – categories two and three in Table 1.

Approach	Process of Initiation	Service Delivery Process	Services	Resource Base	Continuity	Relative cost per beneficiary
1. Direct service delivery	Agency submits proposal to funder, contract is negotiated for delivery of specific services to targeted beneficiaries	Paid staff of a funded agency provide specific direct assistance to targeted beneficiaries	Pre-determined by funder and agency	Funding and possibly technical assistance from donor(s) to agency	Determined by the availability of funding	High
2. Service delivery through community participation	As above, then agency persuades specific community members to carry out specific activities with agency training and support	A funded agency supports community volunteers to provide specific direct assistance to targeted beneficiaries	Pre-determined by funder and agency, possibly with consultation with communities	As above, with addition of volunteer action by community members and possibly use of community resources (e.g., land, expertise, facilities)	As above	Moderate
3. Community-owned, -led, and -managed activities	Community analyzes its own situation, decides what and who it is most concerned about, and initiates action. May be catalyzed (mobilized) by one or more community members or an external agency. May include capacity building of community group and/or designated members	Community members carry out and manage activities they have planned	Determined by community, often in dialogue with mobilizing agency. Cannot be predetermined by mobilizing agency.	Basis is community resources (as above), possibly with additional resources from external body(ies) (e.g., funding, material inputs, expertise, training, information)	Determined by community commitment (closely linked to concern abut problem(s) addressed and sense of ownership of the response) and availability of local resources	Low

The CWCs that the DCOF team had contact with would fall into category two because the concept was developed outside the community and the community was subsequently persuaded to implement it. Some community members listened to the idea of CWCs and decided that it would be worthwhile to establish one and to volunteer and carry out relevant activities. When such an approach is taken, the continuity of the activity or group depends on the mobilizing organization or some other body providing ongoing support. This might be a financial incentive or stipend (which shifts the activity in the direction of category one) and/or providing such support as:

- Providing relevant materials or tools (e.g., notebooks, pens, bicycles, T-shirts, shoes) on a periodic basis;
- Ensuring regular access to information relevant to child protection issues;
- Providing access to information of personal relevance to group members;[3]
- Conducting periodic training and encouraging participants;
- Providing identity cards from a relevant body (e.g., district social welfare office, another district office or body, an NGO with an ongoing commitment to support the CWC);
- Arranging exchange visits with other groups engaged in child protection activities;
- Presenting opportunities to apply for funding for funding or in-kind resources;
- Enabling participants to initiate personal income-generating activities; or
- Linking to programs and organizations.

In discussion with DCOF, members of the Ganta CWC stressed the importance of their having CWC identify cards and their need for ongoing stipends and/or bicycles. Given the approach (category two) that was apparently taken in developing that CWC, these were very reasonable requests.

The kinds of support listed above can also be used to help sustain a community owned, managed, and led initiative, but these elements have to follow, not lead the group's initiating action that it has decided upon using already resources that it has or has mobilized.

From the perspective of the community concerned, when something is introduced by an outside body, the responsibility for it remains with the body that advocated the initiative to the community. Community members may participate or contribute in substantive ways, but they are likely to continue to look to the outside body for ongoing support. This lesson has been learned many times in connection with village water projects. If the initiative to install a pump and most of the resources come from the outside, when the pump breaks, the community is likely to expect the group that built it in the first place to come back and fix it ("Your pump is broken. Please repair it."). The same should be expected with a CWC, when it is a concept that a community has been persuaded to initiate.

In contrast, action which is initiated and planned by community members based on their felt needs and priorities is more likely to be "owned" by participants, and consequently, more likely to continue over time with less dependence on or expectation of outside support from a specific source. Participants in a locally initiated activity may actively seek outside resources whenever opportunities arise, but they are much more likely to feel that they are responsible for ensuring its continuity. While such an approach has a better chance of generating ongoing activities, it has disadvantages from the standpoint of ensuring the specific ongoing action for child protection expected of CWCs.

The specific action to be taken cannot be pre-determined by an outside body, if the intent is to mobilize a community owned, managed, and led initiative. A local group is much more likely to

[3] It is important to recognize that relevant information is an important resource, particularly in more remote rural areas. This could include information about material resources, funding, new policies, scholarship or training opportunities, or other matters of local concern.

carry out an activity over time if it is a response to their own concerns and priorities, which may be very different from those of an outside group. Community action is usually initiated when a group of people finds some action to be in their collective self interest. This may happen as a result of discussion and decision-making solely involving community members, or it may be catalyzed by an outside group. Typically, an outside group plays a catalytic or mobilizing role by helping people to:

- Decide that they share a common and deeply felt concern or desire,
- Define that concern or desire,
- Decide what capacities and resources they are willing and able to bring to bear among those that they control, and
- Decide how and at what pace they are willing to take action.

An outside organization (like IRC), however, cannot pre-determine the specific issues to be addressed, the approach to be taken, the objectives to be achieved, or the timetable of an initiative without being seen by the community as assuming responsibility for the continuity of the initiative. Likewise, if an organization provides significant resources up front to start an activity, implicitly in the eyes of the community, it takes on a degree of responsibility for the continuity of the activity.

In a camp that is expected to have a limited lifespan, the approaches in categories one and two have distinct advantages to achieve specific results quickly. Such pre-determined activities can also be appropriate in a community setting, if there is a body prepared to provide the necessary resources and support on an ongoing basis (e.g., a ministry of health makes a commitment to provide medicines to a community clinic). However, in a community setting, it is not realistic to anticipate that the second approach in Table 1 will result in an activity that the community will continue on its own without ongoing support.

District social welfare officers and/or Child Rights Observatory Groups may be in place in the foreseeable future in the districts where IRC is working, and if so, they may be able to provide some degree of legitimacy to CWCs and a point of referral for them. It seems unlikely, however, that any government agency or structure in the next few years will likely have the capacity to provide tangible, ongoing support for CWCs. Unfortunately, in many African countries, ministries with child protection responsibilities tend to lack resources. In some locations, however, some agency (perhaps an NGO, a mission institution, or some other entity) may be able to commit some level of ongoing support to a CWC, and make that structure viable.

In communities where tangible, ongoing support to a CWC is not likely to be available, a community mobilization approach (category three) may be a more viable way to establish some kind of ongoing child protection activity than initiating a standardized CWC (category 2), which is dependent on ongoing support.

Mobilizers or Interveners?

The second issue that the team discussed with IRC regarding CWCs is that the one visited in Ganta had assumed responsibility for directly identifying and addressing child protection issues. For example, members said that they were doing house-to-house case finding, sensitization, and mediation of child protection issues. Rather than seeing their role as helping their community to identify issues of shared concern and to find ways to address these as a community, CWC members have apparently shouldered responsibility themselves for identifying and addressing problems related to children.

The ten members of the Ganta CWC were selected from each of the town's ten zones. Ganta is a town with approximately 40,000 residents. Even if they were being paid as full-time workers, this would be a heavy burden to assume, but they are working as volunteers. Their approach seems likely to lead to their burning out. DCOF has observed in other situations that community

committees that see their role as mobilizing collective community action seem to have a better chance of continuing over time.[4] This requires, however, members learning appropriate mobilization skills, and benefiting from some level of ongoing outside support. Participatory Learning and Action (PLA) and Training for Transformation are examples of approaches that can be used to help mobilize community action. Appendix E includes a list of resources relevant to community mobilization.

Peer Educators

Peer-to-peer education on life skills and HIV/AIDS is another component of the Vulnerable Children and Youth Protection and Development project (addressing objective 3). The DCOF team was able to talk with some of the peer educators and observe some of their activities. The peer educators interviewed placed a high value on education, as did other youth, and they displayed an intense level of commitment and motivation to sharing their acquired knowledge with counterparts. While this motivation is essential to the role of youth in promoting the current peace-building activities, it is crucial that communication between the peer educators and the implementing organization regarding their mandate be clear and concise. It is also important that the peer educators, understand the content of the materials to be presented, the targeted audience, the scope of the program, as well as the relevant support mechanisms available to them. In addition, analysis of the current community views and responses to sex-related topics is needed to prepare the peer educators to communicate effectively and deal with stigma and culturally sensitive issues.

The peer educators with whom the DCOF team met, were focused on only a portion of the full range of topics planned by IRC. Mr. Williamson's discussion with the peer educators in Ganta resulted in similar observations to those of Mr. Carter at the youth rally in Monrovia and during his visit to camps for the displaced in Montserrado County. In all of these settings, peer educators largely focused on promoting condoms, which is important but only one of the "ABCs" of HIV prevention.[5] This is an important strategy, but by itself, it is unlikely to be effective. For example, at the Ricks Camp for displaced Liberians, where IRC has significantly scaled down its operations, youth regard the peer educators more as condom distributors than educators. At the February 12 youth rally, peer educators demonstrated presentations on several topics normally covered during their sessions with youth in the camps. These topics included teenage pregnancy, STDs, as well as HIV/AIDS awareness. While these topics constitute an important part of the overall reproductive health issues, the presentations lacked the dynamics and energy required to get the attention of youth. Their approach also failed to work as true "peer" education, as the presenters conveyed their material with an overall air of "we are the teachers and we have the answers." The approach observed during the visit to Ganta was similar.

In contrast, the atmosphere and group dynamics among the youth at the rally in Montserado changed drastically when Mr. Carter divided the youth into three groups and solicited responses for the following questions:

- What do we consider most important to our survival today?
- How can we prevent another war in Liberia?
- What role should youth play in ensuring that Liberia remains peaceful?

While responding to these questions, the youths' presentations became more engaging and spontaneous, and each group convincingly responded to the questions. In the same way that

[4] For example, see Jill Donahue and John Williamson, "Community Mobilization to Address the Impacts of AIDS: A Review Of The COPE Program in Malawi, January 17-30, 1998," Displaced Children and Orphans Fund, http://www.usaid.gov/our_work/humanitarian_assistance/the_funds/pubs/reportlst.html

[5] Uganda is one of the few countries, globally, that has been able to reduce the adult HIV prevalence rate. The strategy used there emphasized Abstence (delaying the onset of sexual activity), Being faithful to one partner (for those who are sexually active, and using a Condom consistently – ABC.

education was highlighted by the young people as most important to their immediate survival, the need for good governance also became a prominent answer for all of the groups in regards to how another war could be prevented in Liberia. Responses such as “participatory decision-making,” “a re-evaluation of our value system,” and “an overall refusal to fight another man’s war,” were responses to the third question.

During the camp visits, it became clear that many parents did not want their children to talk with the peer educators. This stems from the culture of Liberia in which “children” are not allowed to discuss and/or partake in anything that would make them “grow before their time.” This essentially means that activities and/or discussions surrounding sex-related issues are considered the business of “adults” and not “children.” It is important to understand that the Liberian definition of a child goes well beyond Western age categories or the Convention on the Rights of the Child. Therefore “children” telling “children” about what is considered an “adult” issue is frowned upon by the traditional Liberian society. While this social constraint should not preclude addressing the issue, failure to recognize it may reduce the effectiveness of the approach observed. An approach customized to the Liberian context would involve adjustments to reduce parents’ resistance to their children’s participation. One aspect of such an approach might be the demonstration of overall adult supervision. While promoting the comparative learning advantage peer education would have in regards to these important issues, exemplifying that the process does have a level of adult supervision would give parents the added comfort of knowing that they are not simply allowing their children to talk about “rude-rude thing,” as Liberians would put it. Giving some emphasis to abstinence and being faithful might also stimulate more acceptance of condom promotion. A subset of this approach may also be identifying and preparing for true “peer sessions.” Another approach that might help better deal with cultural resistance, given the sensitivity to reproductive health issues, might be encouraging peer educators to facilitate same-sex, peer-to-peer discussions. This might also facilitate more openness on the part of participating youth.[13]

Adult liaisons to the peer educators could also encourage peer educators to address a broader range of issues in addition to reproductive health, such as self-esteem building, interpersonal skills, and conflict resolution methods.

At the Ricks Institute Displaced Camp a peer educator said of the activities of the peer educators, “We still try to talk to our friends about sex education and drugs, but most of the youth ask us why we don’t have anymore condoms. We get some [condoms] from the camp center this really doesn’t help.” While this illustrates the overall emphasis on condom distribution, it also describes the current situation with the peer educators at this displaced center, given that IRC is currently working with this group on a very limited scale. As described above regarding the CWCs, due to IRC’s heavy involvement at the beginning of the program, the peer educators feel that the responsibility for its continuity is with IRC and that they have been abandoned.

When asked about the current level of participation of the camp authorities in the continuation of peer education activities, responses indicated that participation is limited to limited condom distribution. At this stage, it is probably too late for the camp communities to assume ownership of the program, and any continuity as the peer educators’ return to their home communities would depend upon significant ongoing involvement of IRC or another agency. Unfortunately, the DCOF team did not have an opportunity to explore with IRC its expectations of the peer educators at this stage. A different approach in communities seems appropriate, though, one that involves adults as well as youth in the development of the program approach and that provides for ongoing support to the program. A process that enables the local community to see itself as a major stakeholder creates the first avenue through which they can begin to define their role in the program’s continuity after the implementing organization is no longer directly involved in the daily activities. The findings of the follow up Knowledge, Attitudes, and Practice (KAP) study should be helpful in planning this transition.

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DCOF-Funded School

Mr. Carter visited a DCOF-funded school in Soul Clinic, Paynesville, to assess the current conditions at the school. The school had an enrollment of 316 pupils, 169 (53 percent) of whom were girls. With bright smiles on their faces, the students happily welcomed the visit, reflecting that despite the conditions at the school, education was still considered important to everyday Liberian life. A tour of the school sadly indicated the following:

- Overcrowding: The school was extremely overcrowded. Lower grades had as many as 79-87 pupils in a tiny room.
- Insufficient materials: Although most of the students did have notebooks, the school had some classrooms with no desks, leaving the students only the option of taking notes on their laps. There was also a lack of textbooks for both teachers and students.
- Insufficient teacher/teacher assistants: In one classroom, two separate grade levels were taught by the same teacher (on two blackboards). This clearly indicated that students in this classroom received only half of the required daily instructional time.

Despite these shortcomings, the school was particularly proud of the level of Parent-Teacher Association (PTA) involvement in its daily activities.

Observations Regarding DDRR

One of the aims of the DCOF visit to Sierra Leone immediately preceding the visit to Liberia was to learn lessons regarding the demobilization and reintegration of former child soldiers. Give the relevance of those issues to the situation in Liberia and IRC's Vulnerable Children and Youth Protection and Development project, the relevant section of the Sierra Leone report is included here.

The February DCOF 2005 visit to Sierra Leone and Liberia followed up issues raised by John Williamson and Lynne Cripe in their 2002 report, "Assessment of DCOF-supported Child Demobilization and Reintegration Activities in Sierra Leone." That report is available at: http://www.usaid.gov/our_work/humanitarian_assistance/the_funds/pubs/reportlst.html .

It identified six elements as being critically important to the successful family and community reintegration of separated children, especially children formerly associated with fighting forces:
- Community Sensitization
- Demobilization and Transition Period
- Tracing and Family Mediation
- Return to Family and Community and Follow-Up
- Traditional Cleansing Ceremonies
- School or Skills Training.[14]

The February 2005 visit confirmed the importance of all of the six factors and found that some elaboration is needed. *Additions and changes are indicated below by italics.* Some of these changes are explained by preceding text. Where appropriate, additional explanation is given below:

1. Community sensitization.

As noted above, community sensitization made a difference in the acceptance and reintegration of former child soldiers. Young women reunified were more likely to remain with their parents or relatives if they were residing in a community where sensitization work had been done to increase acceptance and reduce stigma and hostility.

2. Formal disarmament and demobilization.

There was evident significance to former child soldiers of their having gone through a formal process marking their transition back to civilian life. This is an important step toward reintegration distinct from the following, usually more lengthy period of weeks in an interim care center.

3. Transition period *in separate centers for boys and girls located well away from adult DDR sites.*

Some girls reported sexual harassment in ICCs, either by male residents or adult combatants.

4. Tracing and family mediation.

The importance of a good, country-wide system of tracing and family mediation as part of the reunification process was reinforced by observations during the DCOF visit.

5. Return to family, community, and follow-up, and *extended monitoring for children not placed with their parents.*

Children who were reunited with one or both of their parents tended to do well. Many other children were reunited with extended family members, and some of the latter group have been treated as domestic servants, which is consistent with traditional patterns within the region. In addition to careful screening before placing a separated child with an extended family member and a public agreement that the child will be cared for on a par with other children in the household, a period of regular monitoring is required.

6. Traditional cleansing ceremonies, *traditional healing, and religious support*.

Based on research by a UNICEF consultant, it is appropriate to consider that traditional healing and religious support are additional forms of support that can potentially aid healing of those who suffer violence or abuse. It is also necessary to recognize that traditional practices are not universally benign, and some are harmful. It is important for an organization to determine what a practice involves before encouraging or supporting it.

7. School or skills training *of adequate quality and duration, coupled with literacy and numeracy instruction and provision of tools, materials, and follow-up counseling.*

Demobilized child soldiers tended to value education highly, because it enhances future employment prospects, because it is seen as intrinsically valuable, and because being a student enhances the way that one is regarded by community members. Some chose the skills training option instead, perhaps because they felt too old to return to school or felt a more urgent priority to be able to generate income.

8. *Ongoing access to health care, particularly for war-related conditions for those in school or training.*

Health services were an obvious priority in the ICCs, with some demobilized child soldiers having lived for years in the bush, been wounded, and/or subjected to repeated sexual abuse and exploitation. The infants or young children of female students or trainees often had acute health problems as well. Often health issues could not be adequately resolved during the weeks in an ICC. Access to health services beyond those that might (or more likely might not) be available in a village, was important for the subsequent period of education or training. Some organizations did not make adequate provisions for access to health services.

9. *Individual supportive counseling, facilitation, and encouragement.*

The UNICEF consultant who evaluated the Girls Left Behind project reported that only percent of those interviewed said that they had expected counseling when theyentered the program. About 35 percent said that the things that they most appreciated about the project were the counseling, friendships, and encouragement they received.[15] Team member John Williamson reflected on his experiences during the review of DCOF-supported services in Sierra Leone in 2002 while listening to former program participants during the 2005 visit. He recognized that previously he had not adequately appreciated the importance of counseling during the difficult transition in the ICCs, when making good choices about what skill training to select, when facing hostility within the community, or when struggling to generate income with skills learned.

APPENDIX A, SCOPE OF WORK

Scope of Work for Visit to Liberia by John Williamson and L. Randolph Carter for the Displaced Children and Orphans Fund of USAID
February 9 – 16, 2005

Background

The Displaced Children and Orphans Fund has provided a total of $1,499,293 for Agreement 669-CA-00-03-004 established by USAID/Liberia with the International Rescue Committee (IRC). The duration of this agreement is 9/22/03-9/21/06. Prior to this agreement, DCOF funding was used in Liberia for the WAYS and SWAY projects of UNICEF, which aimed to facilitate the reintegration of former child soldiers and other separated children.

Purpose

This is primarily a monitoring visit for DCOF to observe and collect information on the project's current implementation and its anticipated results. In order to enable the DCOF team to understand the context in which the project is operating, the DCOF Team will seek information on the situation in Liberia, including current and anticipated interventions, trends, critical issues, and opportunities relevant to children affected by armed conflict. In addition, the DCOF team will seek to gather information and establish communication links with relevant experts and organizations working in Liberia in connection with technical operational issues relevant to its projects generally:

- Improving services for children without adequate family by developing standards and guidance on interventions, exchanging lessons learned and facilitating professional exchange
- Microeconomic or livelihood strengthening to improve the well-being of highly vulnerable children
- Interventions to improve the psychosocial well-being of children and young people affected by armed conflict, especially separated children
- The development, strengthening and sustaining of community safety nets for children and youth.[6]

DCOF Team

Members of the DCOF team will include John Williamson, Senior Technical Advisor of DCOF, who has worked for DCOF on a full time basis since 1997, and L. Randolph Carter, originally from Liberia, whose focus is on post-conflict countries and youth employment and reintegration.

Time Frame and Itinerary

The team is scheduled to arrive in Monrovia on February 9, 2005, participate in briefings and meetings in Monrovia regarding the project and the situation of war-affected children in Liberia, visit DDRR activities implemented by IRC in Montserado and Ganta, and conduct exit debriefings with USAID/Liberia and IRC before departing on February 16, 2005.

[6] Prior to their departure for Liberia, the team was also asked by DCOF to give attention to USAID's *Fragile States Strategy* (USAID, January 2005, PD-ACA-999) and explore with the USAID mission in Liberia whether there are critical priorities with respect to social and economic integration of children and adolescents that additional DCOF funding could address effectively over the next 3 to 5 years.

Deliverables

The team will prepare:

- A brief written description of its key observations and recommendations, which is to be presented to USAID/Liberia and IRC at exit debriefings.
- A report on their visit addressing in greater detail their observations regarding the situation of children affected by armed conflict in Liberia and the implementation of DCOF-funded activities and recommendations, which is to be submitted to Lloyd Feinberg, the Manager of DCOF, Cathy Savino the manager of the support project for DCOF, USAID/Liberia, and IRC within two weeks of their return to the United States.

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APPENDIX C, ITINERARY

ACTIVITY	LOCATION	PARTICPANTS
Wednesday, February 9th		
Arrival Monrovia		John Williamson (JW)
Meeting with the Ambassador of the United States to Liberia	US Embassy	Ambassador John Blaney Wilber Thomas (WT), Tracey Herbert (TH), JW
Thursday, February 10th		
Meeting with IRC Country Director	IRC country Office	Nicky Smith (NS) JW
Meeting with senior UNICEF personnel	UNICEF Office	Keith Wright (KW), Fatuma Ibrahim (FI), JW
Meeting with representatives of the Transitional Government of Liberia	UNICEF Office	Minister of Gender and Development Varbah Grayfor, Minister of Education Evelyn Kandakai, Deputy Minister of Health Vivian Cherue (Head of the Department of Social Welfare), Assistant Minister for Gender and Development David Forleh, FI, JW
Meeting with representatives of NGOs working in Liberia	UNICEF Office	Representatives of Don Bosco Homes, World Vision, IRC, Save the Children UK, Christian Children's Fund, NAGROG, LOAF, FI, JW
Travel to Ganta		Rebecca Winthrop (RW), Richard Haselwood, Daniel McVitalis (DMcV), JW
Discussions regarding education	IRC Ganta Base	RW, DMcV, JW
Friday, February 11th		
Program for the opening of the Ganta Community Ministry of Health Clinic	Gbloryee Town	IRC Ganta, Ministry of Health personnel, community residents, RW, DMcV, JW
Discussion regarding education	Gbloryee Town	DMcV, JW
Home visits to talk with girls formerly associated with fighting forces	Ganta area	Fatu, Salome, Gabriel, JW
Meeting and discussion with the Work for Belly CWC	Work for Belly area, Ganta	CWC members, JW
Community program led by Peer Educators and discussion with them	Dakemain community, Ganta	Peer Educators, JW
Dinner and Discussion with IRC Ganta Liberian staff members	Ganta town	Fatu, Salome, Gabriel and others, JW
Arrival Monrovia		Randolph Carter (C)
Visit to Rick's Camp with IRC Child Protection Staff		RC
Meeting with Peer Educators and CWCs	Rick's Institute and Blamasee IDP	RC

	Camp	
Saturday, February 12th		
Travel to Monrovia		RW, DMcV,JW
Youth Rally	St. Theresa's Convent, Monrovia	34 youth, IRC staff, RC, JW
Dinner with Wilber Thomas	Panache Restaurant	WT, RC, JW
Sunday, February 13th		
Visits to Hebron, Phebe Gray, and Waterside orphanages	Monrovia	Miatta A. Clark, Peter Wissert, RC, JW,
Monday, February 14th		
Meeting with American Refugee Committee (ARC)	ARC office	Paula Nawrocki, Paule Josee Drainville, RC, JW
Meeting with IRC Economic Opportunities Manager	IRC office	Mirela Barukcic, RC, JW
Meeting at Liberian Community Infrastructure Program (LCIP)	LCIP office	Michael Curry, RC, JW
Meeting at USAID office	Greystone	TH, Korto Williams, RC, JW
Meeting with Christian Children's Fund (CCF)	CCF office	Wayne Bleier, Sunimal Alles, Erin Kenny, Noah Ochola, RC, JW
Reception for Lloyd Pierson	US Embassy apartments	WT, guests, RC, JW
Tuesday, February 15th		
Visit to DCOF-funded school	Soul Clinic	RC
Visit to economic livelihood program Lucy's Beauty Salon	Chocolate City	RC
Meeting with Mercy Corps (MC)	MC office	Sam Gotomo, JW
Meeting with Student Palava Managers	St. Theresa's Convent	Seven Student Palava Managers, RC, JW
Meeting with Save the Children UK (SC UK)	SC UK office	Dieneke van der Wijk, RC, JW
Meeting with National Commission for Disarmament, Demobilization, Rehabilitation, and Reintegration (NCDDRR)	NCDDRR office	Moses Jarbo, RC, JW
Wednesday, February 16th		
Debriefing with UNICEF	UNICEF office	KW, FI, RC, JW
Luncheon with Lloyd Pierson	Panache Restaurant	Lloyd Pierson, WT, TH, KW, USAID partner agencies, RC, JW
Departure for airport		JW
Discussion	UNICEF office	RC, Claudia Seymour
Thursday, February 17th		
Debriefing with USAID/Liberia	Greystone	RC, Korto Williams
Friday, February 18th		
Departure for airport		RC

APPENDIX D, LIST OF CONTACTS

Transitional Government of Liberia
Varbah Grayfor, Minister of Gender and Development
Evelyn Kandakai, Minister of Education
Vivian Cherue, Deputy Minister of Health (Head of the Department of Social Welfare),
David Forleh, Assistant Minister for Gender and Development

United States Embassy to Liberia
Ambassador John Blaney

USAID/Washington
Lloyd Pierson, Assistant Administrator for Africa

USAID/Monrovia
Wilber Thomas, Mission Director
Tracey Herbert, Reintegration Program Manager
Korto Williams

NCDDRR
Dr. Moses C.T. Jarbo, Executive Director

UNICEF
Keith Wright, Senior Program Officer
Fatuma Ibrahim, Project Officer, Protection
Miatta A. Clark, Assistant Project Officer (Tracing)

IRC
Nicky Smith, Country Director
Richard Haselwood,
Rebecca Winthrop, Education Technical Advisor
Daniel Ooma McVitalis,
Mirela Barukcic, Economic Opportunities Manager

ARC
Paula Nawrocki, Country Director
Paule Josee Drainville, Microfinance Program Manager

Christian Children's Fund
Wayne Bleier, Country Director
Sunimal Alles, Economic Development Advisor
Noah Ochola, Program Manager, Reintegration
Erin Kenny, Social Reintegration Advisor
Abu Sesay, DDRR Project Coordinator
Augustus Ndorbor, Literacy Advisor

LCIP
Michael Curry, Chief of Party

Mercy Corps
Sam Gotomo

SC UK
Dieneke van der Wijk, Program Director
Peter Wissert, Community Worker

APPENDIX E, BIBLIOGRAPHY

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